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 RR RUEHC RUEHDD  
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 R 131824Z JAN 84  
 FM AMEMBASSY MADRID  
 TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 3028  
 INFO RUEHDD/NATO COLLECTIVE  
 RUESBG/AMEMBASSY BOGOTA 1122  
 RUEHCV/AMEMBASSY CARACAS 1583  
 RUEHGT/AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA 0502  
 RUESMG/AMEMBASSY MANAGUA 0637  
 RUEHME/AMEMBASSY MEXICO 0557  
 RUEHZP/AMEMBASSY PANAMA 0727  
 RUFHRA/AMEMBASSY RABAT 3119  
 RUEHSJ/AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE 0644  
 RUEHSN/AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR 0559  
 RUEHTV/AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV 0974  
 BT  
 C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 00342

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR  
 TAGS: PREL, SP, NATO, XK, IS  
 SUBJECT: MEETING OF CODEL LANTOS WITH ACTING FOREIGN  
 MINISTER PUENTE

1. (CONFIDENTIAL) ENTIRE TEXT

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2. SUMMARY. AMBASSADOR AND CODEL LANTOS (REPS WINN, PICKLE, SEIBERLING, VANDER JAGT, THOMAS, COLEMAN, SILJANDER, LOWER), WITH DEPUTY NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISER FORTIER) MET WITH ACTING FOREIGN MINISTER GONZALO PUENTE FOR AN HOUR JANUARY 9. PUENTE BROKE NO NEW GROUND ON NATO, SAID THAT SPAIN WOULD ESTABLISH RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL "IN THE NEAR FUTURE" BUT AT RIGHT MOMENT, AND DOWNPLAYED SPAIN'S EFFECTIVE ROLE IN CENTRAL AMERICA. REP LANTOS PRESSED HARD ON NATO (MORE IMPORTANT TO SPAIN THAN TO THE ALLIANCE) AND ON ISRAEL (A MATTER OF PRINCIPLE). END SUMMARY.

NATO

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3. IN BOTH HIS OPENING REMARKS AND IN ANSWER TO QUESTIONS PUENTE WAS CAUTIOUS BUT THE THRUST WAS POSITIVE. HE REITERATED THE 1985 DATE FOR A REFERENDUM AND WOULD NOT PREDICT THE OUTCOME. HOWEVER, "IF BY CHANCE" SPAIN SHOULD LEAVE NATO, IT WOULD LOOK TO STRENGTHEN ITS BI-LATERAL DEFENSE AGREEMENTS AND WOULD CONTINUE TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE DEFENSE OF EUROPE. IN ANSWER TO A QUESTION WHETHER NATO WAS A MAJOR ISSUE IN THE LAST

JFH  
 PR R  
 NG L

PT 1  
 MB ✓

file: Cong. Santos  
 Cong. Winn  
 Cong. Pickle  
 Cong. Seiberling  
 Cong. Vander Jagt  
 Cong. L. Thomas  
 Cong. Coleman  
 Cong. Siljander  
 Cong. Lowery

HFA

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ELECTION, PUENTE REVIEWED THE HISTORY OF SPANISH NEUTRALITY (STARTING WITH 1870), AND DESCRIBED THE STRONG NEUTRALIST SENTIMENT AS PART OF SPAIN'S CULTURAL TRADITION. HE DENIED THAT THERE IS A FORMAL LINK BETWEEN NATO AND EC BUT MADE CLEAR THAT SPAIN WANTS TO BE PART OF AN INTEGRATED EUROPE.

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4. REP THOMAS ASKED WHETHER THE NATO REFERENDUM WOULD BE ALL OR NOTHING AND WHAT THE GOVERNMENT'S ROLE WOULD BE. AVOIDING SPECIFICS AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE, PUENTE FELT CERTAIN THAT ADEQUATE INFORMATION ON BOTH PROS AND CONS WOULD BE PROVIDED TO THE PUBLIC AND THOUGHT THAT THE MEDIA AND THE PSOE WOULD BE THE MAIN CHANNELS. HE MENTIONED THE IMPORTANCE OF THE PSOE CONGRESS LATE THIS YEAR. THE GOVERNMENT COULD NOT RIG THE OUTCOME BUT HE THOUGHT IT INEVITABLE THAT THE GOS WOULD HAVE TO TAKE A POSITION ON WHAT DECISION IT PREFERRED; THE WORDING OF THE REFERENDUM WOULD DEPEND TO SOME DEGREE ON WHERE THE GOVERNMENT CAME DOWN. PUENTE ASSURED THE CODEL THAT THE GOS WOULD DO WHAT IS BEST "FOR SPAIN", FOR THE WORLD AND FOR THE WESTERN ALLIANCE.

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5. REP LANTOS NOTING THAT WE OBVIOUSLY PREFERRED A POSITIVE OUTCOME SAID THAT "NATO NEEDS SPAIN MUCH LESS THAN SPAIN NEEDS NATO," THAT SPANISH MEMBERSHIP IS PRINCIPALLY OF BENEFIT TO SPAIN. LANTOS ADDED THAT IS IS NOT IN SPAIN'S OWN INTEREST "NOT TO STAND OUT" WITH A SPECIAL ARRANGEMENT, THAT IT SHOULD FOLLOW THE EXAMPLE OF COUNTRIES LIKE GERMANY, ITALY AND THE NETHERLANDS, NOT FRANCE. A SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP WOULD RAISE MANY QUESTIONS IN EUROPE AND THE U.S. IN HIS BRIEF REPLY, PUENTE AVOIDED LANTOS'S MAIN POINT, BUT SAID THAT THE GOVERNMENT WOULD PAY A "HEAVY PRICE" TO STAY IN -- PRESUMABLY A REFERENCE TO THE STRENGTH OF NEUTRALIST SENTIMENT.

CENTRAL AMERICA

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6. PUENTE SAID THAT SPAIN HAS MORAL INFLUENCE BUT LIMITED ABILITY AND RESOURCES TO INFLUENCE DEVELOPMENTS. SPEAKING MORE GENERALLY WITH RESPECT TO LATIN AMERICA, HE DESCRIBED AS "ARROGANT" AND "INEFFECTIVE" THE IDEA THAT SPAIN HAS A SPECIAL ROLE TO SERVE AS A BRIDGE BETWEEN EUROPE AND LATIN AMERICA. (THIS LAST POINT WAS MADE IN RESPONSE TO A SUGGESTION BY REP. COLEMAN THAT SPAIN COULD PLAY A

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VERY CONSTRUCTIVE ROLE IN THE MANAGEMENT AND SHOULD NOT BE AS RELUCTANT AS IT APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN.)

7. REP. SILJANDER ASKED FOR PUENTE'S WISDOM IN DEALING "WITH OUR FRIENDS SOUTH OF THE BORDER". PUENTE SAID THAT WE (AND PRESUMABLY OTHERS) SHOULD CONTINUE TO ENCOURAGE THE GRN TO MAKE GOOD ON ITS PROMISES, THAT SOCIO-ECONOMIC REFORMS WERE BASIC TO A SOLUTION AND THAT THE RIGHT PRESENTS ONLY TEMPORARY SOLUTIONS. PUENTE THOUGHT IT INEVITABLE THAT THE "BOURGEOISIE" WAS GOING TO LOSE ITS PRIVILEGED POSITION. NEITHER IN ANSWER TO SILJANDER NOR TO AN EARLIER QUESTION BY REP. PICKLE WOULD PUENTE ENTER INTO OVERT CRITICISM OF U.S. POLICY.

8. IN ANSWER TO A QUESTION WHETHER SPAIN SUPPORTS INTERNATIONALLY SUPERVISED ELECTIONS IN CENTRAL AMERICA AND WHETHER IT WOULD PARTICIPATE, PUENTE SAID THAT WOULD

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PROBABLY DEPEND ON WHETHER THE ELECTIONS WERE HELD  
"IN CONDITIONS OF REAL FREEDOM" AND ON INVITATIONS  
FROM THE GOVERNMENTS CONCERNED.  
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ISRAEL/LEBANON  
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9. IN HIS INITIAL REMARKS PUENTE DESCRIBED THE LACK OF  
RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL AS ANOMALOUS AND SAID THAT THEY  
WOULD BE ESTABLISHED "IN THE SHORT RUN" -- BUT AT THE  
RIGHT MOMENT AND WITH AT LEAST THE TACIT UNDERSTANDING  
OF THE ARAB NATIONS.

10. REP. LANTOS CAME BACK TO THE ISSUE LATER IN THE DIS-  
CUSSION SAYING THAT IT WAS VERY DIFFICULT TO UNDERSTAND  
THE FAILURE OF SPAIN THUS FAR TO ESTABLISH RELATIONS.  
SPAIN IS NOW A DEMOCRACY; ISRAEL HAS BEEN ONE SINCE 1948.  
RELATIONS SHOULD BE A MATTER OF PRINCIPLE NOT SUBJECT TO  
A QUID PRO QUO. THE ABSENCE OF RELATIONS COULD HAVE  
LONG TERM NEGATIVE IMPLICATIONS FOR SPAIN IN THE U.S.  
PUENTE APPEARED TO ACKNOWLEDGE LANTOS'S POINTS. HE SAID  
THAT SPAIN HAS ITS OWN HISTORIC AND NATIONAL REASONS FOR  
WANTING TO MOVE AHEAD ON THIS ISSUE; REITERATING, HE  
SAID THE ARAB ATTITUDES HAD TO BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT.  
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11. REP. WINN ASKED WHETHER, SHOULD U.S. TROOPS BE REMOVED  
FROM LEBANON, SPAIN WOULD BE WILLING TO CONTRIBUTE RE-  
PLACEMENTS. PUENTE TEMPORIZED: THE ECONOMIC BURDEN;  
SPAIN'S LIMITED EXPERIENCE IN SUCH ACTIVITIES; IT WOULD  
REQUIRE CAREFUL CONSIDERATION. MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH  
AFRICA DIRECTOR GENERAL SASSOT WAS LESS UNCERTAIN. HE  
THOUGHT IT VERY UNLIKELY THAT SPAIN WOULD CONTRIBUTE TO  
SUCH A FORCE UNLESS IT WERE UNDER UN AUSPICES.

ENDERS  
END-OF MESSAGE

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